

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Yetunde Mondie Sapp. I am about to be 20 years-old, and I am a tax paying citizen of the District of Columbia. Since age 4, I have lived at 1357 Maple View PI SE in a beautiful home right next door to the site in question -- 2352, 2356, and 2360 High Street SE.

I remember the gigantic boarded buildings that were there for over a decade of my growing up. There were racoons, loitering, burning of stolen stripped cars, and guns pulled from the building when it was finally demolished. Those gigantic buildings never fit into the fabric of our historic, residential neighborhood. We have appreciated the lot being empty and green as opposed to what was there before. We have been highly anticipating what might come to the lot.

This brings me to some of my biggest concerns about the proposed project.

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~~Our~~ mother attended meetings about this project last summer, this past fall, and several weeks ago. We appreciate that the developers have taken into account some of the community's concerns. However, some of our household's concerns remain.

RE ZONING
#1 Rezoning -- Currently, the lot for the proposed project is zoned for R-3, which allows for groups of three or more row dwellings, mingled with detached dwellings and semi-detached dwellings. The R-3 zoning allows for the equivalent of about 5 houses on the lot in question. The site of the proposed project is not zoned for RA-2, the type of zoning needed for the proposed 28 unit development. Changing the zoning to RA-2 would allow for predominantly moderate-density residential housing, but this type of density is not appropriate at High Street and Maple View. Therefore, we oppose DHCD changing the zoning from R-3 to RA-2.

changing the zoning

Changing the zoning to RA-2 would open a can of worms that should not be opened. It would open up the way for the developer to do whatever they decided to do in terms of units, height, and density. What guarantees do we have from the developer, from DHCD, that the developer's current proposal of 28 units will be honored once the zoning is changed? Our community has been burned before by such promises. The monstrosity Maple View Flats is proof of that.

We want the zoning to stay at R-3. Something like five houses would be ideal for maintaining the historic fabric, character and residential nature of our neighborhood.

#2 DENSITY -- Once the zoning is changed from R3 to RA-2, the density of buildings and people will be an issue. Our neighborhood is a historic, residential neighborhood. We want to keep it that way as much as possible especially up and down side streets. At the corner of Martin Luther King, a main thoroughfare, and Maple View Pl, we now have Maple View Flats, a massive project that was also built with utter disregard for residents' legitimate concerns. Specifically, many community members fought against Maple View Flats and wanted the city to preserve and rehab the three historic houses that were once there. The community was even presented with restoration plans for the houses and the lot, but DHCD went against those plans and built the high-density, monstrosity Maple View Flats, an example of housing that disrupts the fabric, character, and residential nature of Historic Anacostia. We are asking DHCD to hear the voices and concerns of the residents about this project.

3 PARKING -- We appreciate that the revised proposal for the project will have at least 1 parking space per unit. However, this could still mean significantly more vehicles on High Street and Maple View. Multiple cars per unit and cars that belong to visitors should be anticipated. To address the parking issue, the developer plans to offer parking spaces for bikes. Maple View is a very steep hill of a street. We rarely see bikers travelling to the top of the street and, therefore, do not believe that offering bike parking will alleviate the street parking issues that will be created by this proposed project.

#4 TRAFFIC -- Maple View is a short, narrow street and High Street is a one way street. Several times a day, drivers drive up Maple View and make a U turn at the top of High Street to go back down Maple View. Also several times a day, vehicles drive illegally up High St, which again is one-way, to the top of Maple View as a shortcut. Such traffic has posed threats to vehicles parked along these streets. Therefore, additional cars will cause traffic issues on top of the parking issues. The proposed project does not adequately address these potential traffic issues.

5 AFFORDABILITY -- If the 28 units is approved, we do not want the long term condition of the property to be negatively impacted by a financially dysfunctional condo association, which Ward 8 has its share of. Condo developments with units that ~~sale~~^{sell} for \$50-\$75K often have a bankrupt condo association behind them. A dysfunctional condo association will not be able to sustain a building of this density. Also, in terms of affordability, we want a balanced approach to development, an approach that does not work to concentrate any one income level in Ward 8. Such saturation will potentially hinder economic development of Historic Anacostia. We do not have a grocery store and other amenities for example. How will such a development attract other retail and amenities that our community needs?

Thank you for your time and consideration.